THE FALLEN 1

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CIVIL WAR II

THE FALLEN

BRUCE BANNER, A.K.A. THE INCREDIBLE HULK, IS DEAD.

CLINT BARTON, A.K.A. HAWKEYE, THE MAN WHO KILLED HIM, HAS BEEN ACQUITTED.

NOW THE HULK'S FRIENDS AND FAMILY GRAPPLE WITH THEIR GRIEF...

...AND THEIR ANGER.

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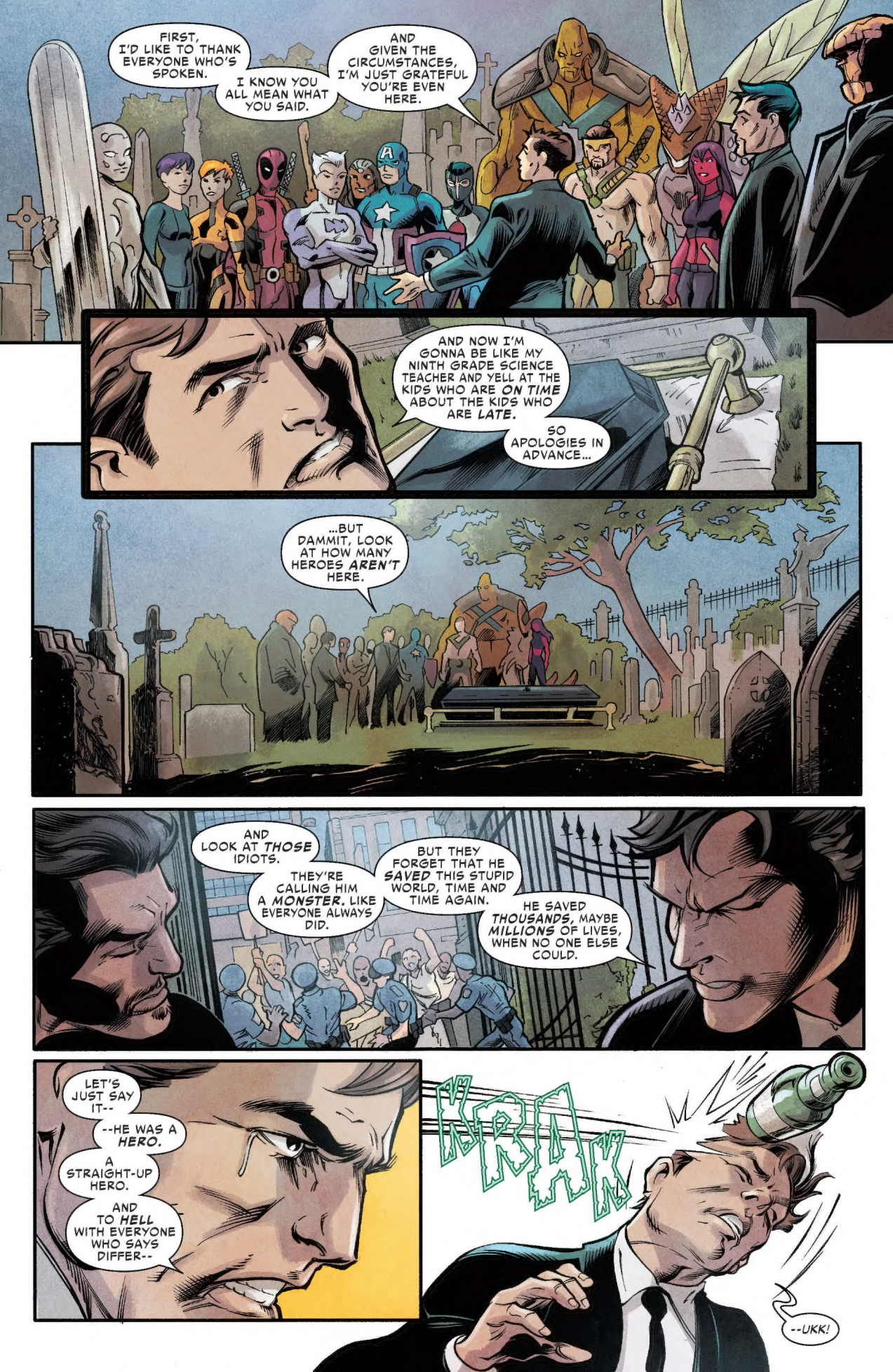
PART ONE.
CLEVELAND, OHIO.
TWO MONTHS AGO.
NEWS 7
WHAT THE HELL?!
I KNOW, I KNOW...ALL THE STREETS AROUND THE MEMORIAL PARK ARE BLOCKED OFF.
ALL THIS FOR A FUNERAL?
WELL, LET'S JUST SAY THE GUY THEY'RE BURYING...
"...WASN'T EXACTLY THE MOST POPULAR."
BURN IN HELL
HELL FOR HULK
GOOD RIDDANCE

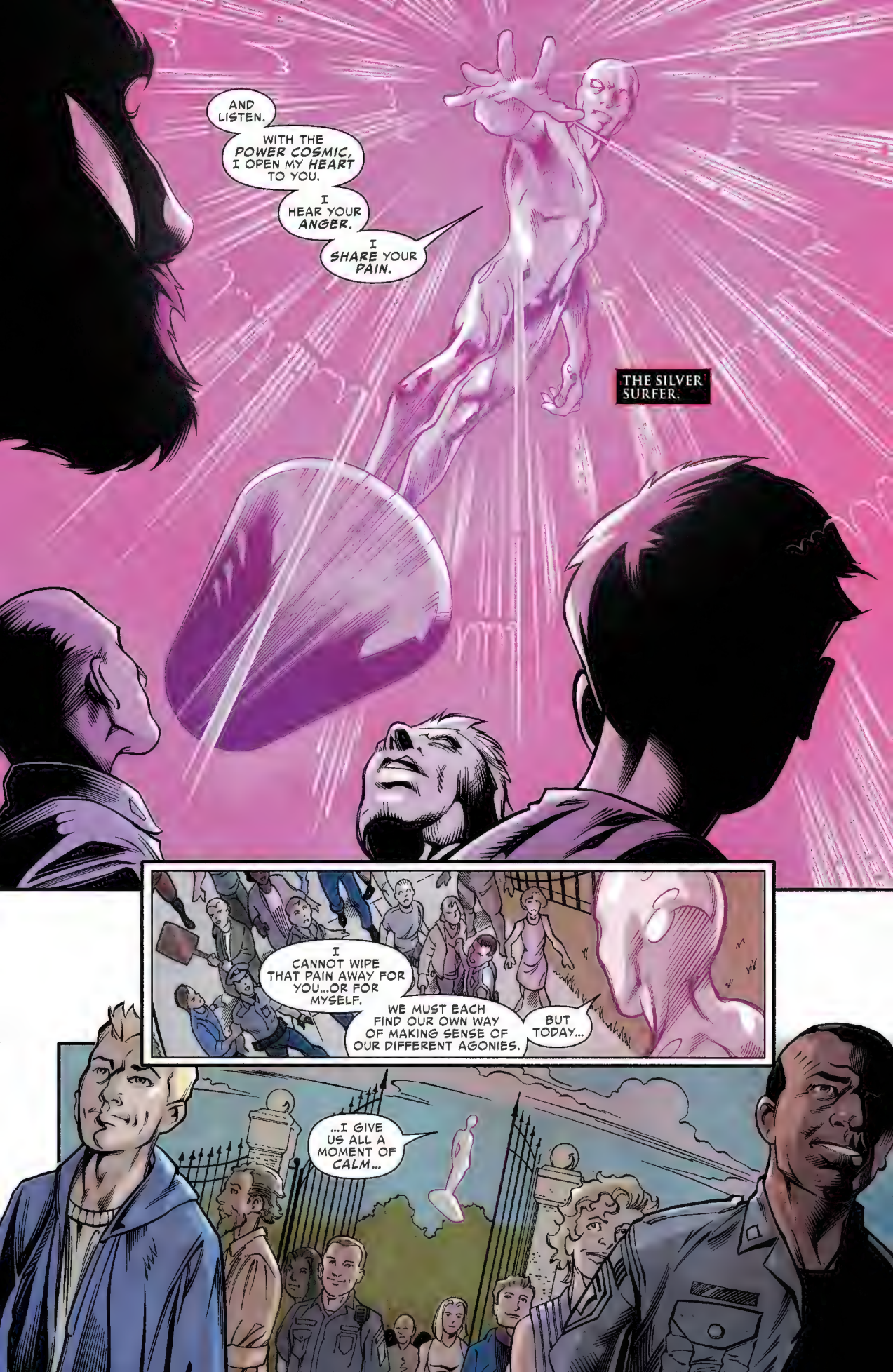
BRUCE BANNER WAS ONE OF THE SMARTEST PEOPLE I EVER MET.
AND I'M NOT JUST TALKING *NUMBERS* SMART, EVEN THOUGH HE COULD WORK AN ALGORITHM FASTER AND BETTER THAN JUST ABOUT ANYONE...
...I MEAN *CREATIVELY* BRILLIANT.
YOU COULD SHOW HIM THE *MATHEMATICAL PROOF* THAT A THING ABSOLUTELY *HAD* TO HAPPEN *ONE SPECIFIC WAY*...
...AND HE'D SIT AND THINK...
...AND THINK A LITTLE MORE...
...AND HE WOULD FIND *ANOTHER* WAY.
I CAN'T THINK OF ANY HIGHER PRAISE.
AND I WISH...
REYNOLDS
MOSS

...I WISH MORE OF US WERE LIKE HIM IN THAT REGARD.
TONY STARK, A.K.A. IRON MAN.
I KNOW A LITTLE SOMETHING ABOUT CURSES...
...AND I'VE NEVER SEEN ANYONE BEAR SUCH A BURDEN WITH SO MUCH GRACE.
DOCTOR STEPHEN STRANGE.
I GUESS I WENT HEAD-TO-HEAD WITH HIM MORE THAN JUST ABOUT ANYONE.
AND AS MUCH AS IT CHEESES ME OFF, I'M FINALLY GONNA SAY IT...
...HE REALLY WAS THE STRONGEST ONE THERE IS.
BEN GRIMM, A.K.A. THE THING.
AYE, HE WAS AT THAT.
AND YOU'VE GOT THE CRACKS TO PROVE IT.
HA.
HA, HA!
HERCULES, SON OF ZEUS.
ALL RIGHT, THEN...
...BETTY, DID YOU WANT TO SAY A--
GRRRAAAAA--!

--WHO THE HELL DO THEY THINK THEY ARE?
THAT MONSTER DESTROYED MY HOME!
MY WHOLE NEIGHBORHOOD!
AND THEY'RE JUST UP THERE LAUGHING?
BURN IN HELL! BURN IN HELL! BURN IN HELL!
IGNORE THOSE IDIOTS. YOU JUST GO AHEAD AND--
NO. NO, IT'S ALL RIGHT.
BURN IN HELL! BURN IN HELL!
I DON'T HAVE ANYTHING TO SAY.
BURN IN HELL! BURN IN HELL!
BETTY ROSS. EX-WIFE OF BRUCE BANNER.
WELL, I GUESS I DO.
RICK JONES. THE HULK'S OLDEST FRIEND.


FIRST, I'D LIKE TO THANK EVERYONE WHO'S SPOKEN.
I KNOW YOU ALL MEAN WHAT YOU SAID.
AND GIVEN THE CIRCUMSTANCES, I'M JUST GRATEFUL YOU'RE EVEN HERE.
AND NOW I'M GONNA BE LIKE MY NINTH GRADE SCIENCE TEACHER AND YELL AT THE KIDS WHO ARE *ON TIME* ABOUT THE KIDS WHO ARE *LATE.*
SO APOLOGIES IN ADVANCE...
...BUT DAMMIT, LOOK AT HOW MANY HEROES *AREN'T* HERE.
AND LOOK AT *THOSE* IDIOTS.
THEY'RE CALLING HIM A *MONSTER.* LIKE EVERYONE ALWAYS DID.
BUT THEY FORGET THAT HE *SAVED* THIS STUPID WORLD, TIME AND TIME AGAIN.
HE SAVED *THOUSANDS,* MAYBE *MILLIONS* OF LIVES, WHEN NO ONE ELSE COULD.
LET'S JUST SAY IT--
--HE WAS A *HERO.*
A STRAIGHT-UP HERO.
AND TO *HELL* WITH EVERYONE WHO SAYS DIFFER--
KRAK
--UKK!

YAAAAH!
LET US THROUGH!
GAH!
BURN IN HELL!
GET BACK! NOW!
WHO DO YOU THINK YOU ARE?!
RICK, NO--
COME ON, THEN!
EVERYONE, ON THE GROUND, NOW!
AAAAGH!
STOP.


AND LISTEN.
WITH THE POWER COSMIC, I OPEN MY HEART TO YOU.
I HEAR YOUR ANGER.
I SHARE YOUR PAIN.
THE SILVER SURFER:
I CANNOT WIPE THAT PAIN AWAY FOR YOU...OR FOR MYSELF.
WE MUST EACH FIND OUR OWN WAY OF MAKING SENSE OF OUR DIFFERENT AGONIES.
BUT TODAY...
...I GIVE US ALL A MOMENT OF CALM...

"...SO THAT TOMORROW WE MAY BEGIN TO SEE MORE CLEARLY."
SO.
JUST US, HUH?
WE WERE HIS WARBOUND...
...BONDED TO HIM FOREVER IN THE GLADIATORIAL ARENAS OF THE RED KING.
KORG, ELLOE AND NO-NAME OF PLANET SAKAAR.
WE ARE ALL HIS FAMILY.
AND EACH OF US, IN OUR OWN WAY, WILL MOURN HIM BETTER THAN THE PUNY HUMANS DID TODAY.
BUT NOW WE MUST CARE FOR THE OTHERS.
THERE ARE FOUR MORE HULKS.
NONE OF THEM CAME TODAY.
BUT EACH WILL NEED US IN A DIFFERENT WAY.

FIRST... SKAAR, SON OF HULK, BORN IN FURY IN THE FLAMES OF SAKAAR.
WE WARBOUND WILL FIND HIM...
...AND MAKE SURE HIS RAGE DOESN'T BREAK THIS WORLD.
OKAY. RIGHT.
JEN WALTERS, HIS COUSIN. SHE-HULK. SHE WAS NEARLY KILLED BY THANOS. STILL IN THE HOSPITAL.
I'LL GO TO HER WHEN SHE WAKES UP.
AND THEN THERE'S MY FATHER, GENERAL ROSS. THE RED HULK.
HE HUNTED BRUCE LONGER THAN ANYONE ON THE PLANET.
BUT HE HATED THE HULK.
I DON'T...
I DON'T KNOW WHAT THE POINT OF TALKING TO HIM WOULD BE.
HE'S DEPOWERED AND IMPRISONED ANYWAY, SO...
THE HULK ALWAYS SAID HE WANTED TO BE LEFT ALONE.
BUT HE MADE US HIS FAMILY. BECAUSE HE KNEW WE NEEDED HIM...
...AND HE NEEDED US.
WE SAVED HIM FROM HIMSELF.
NOW WE MUST DO THE SAME FOR EACH OTHER...

...EVEN FOR YOUR FATHER.
I'LL...
...I'LL TALK TO HIM.
OKAY.
THAT LEAVES AMADEUS CHO. THE NEW HULK.
HE WENT A LITTLE CRAZY AFTER BRUCE DIED.
S.H.I.E.L.D.'S BEEN CHASING HIM.
I'LL FIND HIM.
RICK JONES...
...JUST NOW, YOU TRIED TO FIGHT THOSE SCREAMING HUMANS.
I KNOW YOU'RE ANGRY. WE ALL ARE.
BUT REMEMBER...
...YOUR JOB IS TO CALM AMADEUS' RAGE...
...NOT FUEL IT.

PART TWO.
[CLASSIFIED] MILITARY PRISON.
DID YOU SEE THE BODY?
YES, DAD.
AND THE BRAIN. DID YOU SEE--
YES, I SAW HIS BRAIN.
IT HAD AN ARROW THROUGH IT.
WELL...
...GOOD.
WHAT?
COME ON.
WHY DID YOU COME HERE, BETTY?
...
I TOLD THEM...
...I TOLD THEM I'D CHECK UP ON YOU. JUST IN CASE YOU NEEDED...
BUT YOU DON'T NEED ANYONE, DO YOU?
ALL RIGHT. CARDS ON THE TABLE. I...
...I CAME HERE BECAUSE HE WAS MY HUSBAND. AND YOU'RE MY FATHER.
I JUST...
...I JUST WANTED...

COMFORT?
FATHERLY CONCERN?
WELL, I'M SORRY FOR YOU.
AND I'M SAD FOR BRUCE. HE CERTAINLY CARRIED THAT BURDEN BETTER THAN MOST MEN EVER COULD HAVE.
BUT THE HULK WAS A MONSTER.
AND YOU KNOW THAT'S HOW I'VE ALWAYS FELT.
SO, CARDS ON THE TABLE?
YOU DIDN'T COME HERE FOR COMFORT.
YOU CAME HERE TO FEEL ME OUT.
TO SEE IF THERE'S ANY CHANCE I MIGHT BE UP FOR WHATEVER YOU HAVE PLANNED.
AND THE ANSWER IS NO.
I'M JUST A POWERLESS OLD MAN IN THE MOST SECURE PRISON ON THE PLANET. AND I WOULDN'T HELP YOU WITH THIS EVEN IF--
WHAT THE HELL ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?
I DON'T HAVE ANYTHING PLANNED!
I'M YOUR FATHER, BETTY.
I KNOW YOU BETTER THAN ANYONE.
AND I KNOW DEEP DOWN...
...YOU'RE JUST AS ANGRY AS BRUCE EVER WAS.

EDGE OF THE PYRENEES MOUNTAINS.
SOUTHERN FRANCE.
SKAAR. SON OF HULK.
‹HEY, HEY, SANTOS! LONG TIME NO SEE!›*
‹YEAH, KIND OF LOST TRACK OF TIME OUT THERE.›
‹WELL, IT'S A BEAUTIFUL SUMMER, AND IT LOOKS LIKE YOU DID ALL RIGHT!›
*TRANSLATED FROM FRENCH.
‹JUST HUNT WHAT I NEED TO EAT.›
‹WELL, I'M GLAD YOU HAVEN'T FIGURED OUT HOW TO EAT THE PELTS THEN, HA HA!›
‹LEMME GET YOUR CASH...›
‹AND NOW, IN INTERNATIONAL NEWS...›
LA MORTE DU MONSTRE
‹...BRUCE BANNER, BETTER KNOWN AS THE HULK, WAS SHOT AND KILLED BY CLINT BARTON, THE FORMER AVENGER KNOWN AS HAWKEYE.›
‹TODAY, WE'RE RECEIVING WORD THAT BARTON HAS BEEN ACQUITTED IN THE HULK'S DEATH, WHICH HIS LAWYERS DESCRIBED AS JUSTIFIABLE HOMICIDE.›
‹ALL RIGHT, SANTOS. HERE'S YOUR--›
‹SANTOS?›

TWO HUNDRED MILES INTO THE PYRENEES.
KKRAAK
SOME TIME LATER.
AH, SKAAR...
...YOU'VE TAKEN YOUR STONE FORM...
...SO I DON'T KNOW IF YOU CAN HEAR US NOW...
...BUT WE COME TO MOURN WITH YOU.

YOUR FATHER WAS THE GREEN SCAR...
...THE GREEN KING.
HAARG. HOLKU. HULK.
WE COMMEND HIM TO YOU, O LORD.
HE FREED THE SLAVES OF THE GREAT ARENA.
HE BROKE THE BONDAGE OF THE RED KING.
HE FOUGHT FOR US AND BORE ALL THE SUFFERING THAT FELL ON HIM FOR HIS RAGE.
HE LOST HIS SON IN THE FIRES THAT BURNED OUR WORLD...
...AND THEN HE DID EVERYTHING IN HIS POWER TO FIND HIM AGAIN.
AND HE SWORE A PROMISE...
...TO ALWAYS...
...ALWAYS BE THERE FOR HIM.
FOR YOU.
NOW, WARBOUND, AS OUR DEBT TO HIM...
...LET US SPEAK OUR TRUE NAMES.
KORG OF KRONA, SON OF O-KORG AND AHNA.

ELLOE KAIFI, DAUGHTER OF RONAN AND MARA KAIFI.
NO-NAME, WARRIOR-PRIME OF BROODWORLD.
IN LIFE AND DEATH. THE OATH THAT CANNOT BE BROKEN.
WE ARE WARBOUND...
...TO YOU, SKAAR.
SKKRRAAAKK
SS-SKAAR...
...S-SON OF...
+SOB+
WE ARE HERE, SKAAR.
WE WILL ALWAYS BE HERE.

MOJAVE DESERT.
NEW MEXICO.
COME ON, AMADEUS. I KNOW YOU'RE OUT THERE.
THIS IS THE ENCRYPTED COMMUNICATOR. NOTHING TO FEAR.
TALK TO ME.
TAK TAK TAK TAK TAK TAK
UFF.
HUH.
RICK?

BETTY?
WHAT ARE YOU DOING?
NOTHING.
WAITING.
I'VE BEEN PINGING AMADEUS FOR THE PAST THREE DAYS AND--
I MEAN, WHAT ARE YOU DOING WITH THAT GUN?
...
THIS IS RIDICULOUS.
YOU'RE RICK JONES, NOT THE PUNISHER.
EVEN WHEN YOU WERE A-BOMB, YOU WERE THE FUN AND CUDDLY HULK.
SO DON'T PRETEND LIKE--
SOMETIMES THINGS HAPPEN AND PEOPLE CHANGE.
WE CAN'T JUST LET BARTON WALK! WE HAVE TO DO SOMETHING--
BEEP BEEP
IS IT AMADEUS?
NO...

MOTEL 5
"...IT'S BRUCE'S LAWYER."
THANK YOU ALL FOR COMING, AND PLEASE ACCEPT MY DEEPEST CONDOLENCES.
PART THREE.
AKRON, OHIO.
MY NAME IS MATT MURDOCK.
AND I HAVE THE SAD DUTY OF SERVING AS THE EXECUTOR OF BRUCE'S WILL.
EVERYONE KNOWS BRUCE RECORDED A LIVING WILL.
THEY PLAYED PART OF IT DURING CLINT BARTON'S TRIAL.
BUT THERE'S ANOTHER PART OF THAT RECORDING THAT WAS INTENDED FOR JUST THE PEOPLE IN THIS ROOM, NOT THE GENERAL PUBLIC.
I'LL LET BRUCE TAKE IT FROM HERE...
HELLO, EVERYONE.
I'M...SO SORRY.

I ALWAYS HAD THE FEELING I'D EITHER LIVE FOREVER OR DIE WAY TOO SOON.
IF YOU'RE SEEING THIS, THINGS PROBABLY TOOK THAT SECOND ROAD.
SO, I'M SORRY FOR LEAVING YOU.
AND I'M SORRY IF I LEFT WITHOUT SAYING GOODBYE...OR MAKING ALL THE APOLOGIES I SHOULD HAVE.
BECAUSE I KNOW I BROUGHT CHAOS AND ANGER INTO YOUR LIVES.
AND IF YOU FEEL...RELIEF, I UNDERSTAND.
DON'T FEEL GUILTY ABOUT THAT.
NOT FOR A SECOND.
YOU'RE FREE.
FINALLY.
AND NOW IT'S TIME FOR THE PRESENTS!

FIRST, TONY STARK.
A COUPLE OF YEARS AGO YOU MENTIONED IN PASSING THAT YOU WERE HAVING SOME TROUBLE ELIMINATING MINOR TELEPORTATION-RELATED NEGATIVE ZONE TIME SLIPS DUE TO IRRECONCILABLE MULTIDIMENSIONAL THERMODYNAMIC DIFFERENCES.
WELL, I RECONCILED 'EM FOR YOU.
WHA...
AND I REALLY WISH I COULD SEE YOUR FACE RIGHT NOW.
SONOFAGUN.
DOCTOR STEPHEN STRANGE. SORCERER SUPREME.
WE WERE ALWAYS SO BUSY TAKING ON DORMAMMU AND UMAR AND NIGHTMARE TOGETHER THAT I DON'T EVER THINK I TOLD YOU...
...THE HULK COULD SEE GHOSTS. OR AT LEAST THINGS THAT SAID THEY WERE GHOSTS.
HM!
I NEVER FIGURED OUT A SCIENTIFIC EXPLANATION FOR IT.
BUT I HEREBY BEQUEATH TO YOU ALL THE DATA I EVER COLLECTED ON THE PHENOMENON.
MAYBE IF IT'S FOR REAL...
...WHICH OF COURSE I DOUBT...
...WE CAN TALK IT OVER IN PERSON SOME DAY.

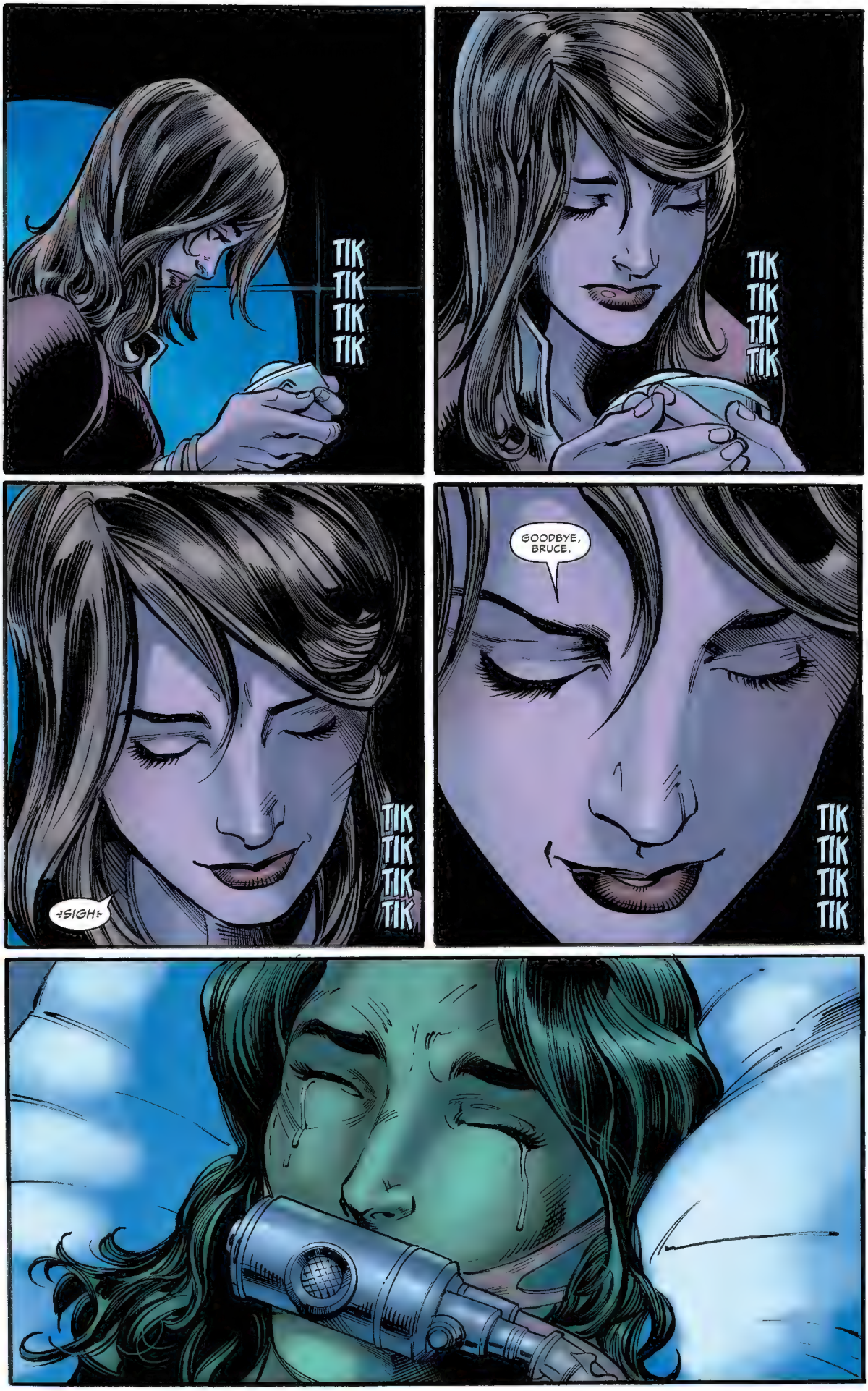
AND NOW FOR BETTY, SKAAR, RICK, JEN, KORG, ELLOE, NO-NAME AND AMADEUS...
...MY... FAMILY.
EACH OF YOU GETS AN EQUAL SHARE OF MY LIQUIDATED CASH ESTATE.
WHICH, I'M SORRY TO SAY, AMOUNTS TO JUST $1,324 EACH.
HA!
BUT YOU EACH ALSO GET A 1/7 SHARE IN A BENEFIT CORPORATION I'VE SET UP TO ADMINISTER MY PATENTS.
JEN AND AMADEUS, YOU'RE THE NEW CORPORATE MANAGERS.
SO FAR, THE COMPANY'S ANONYMOUSLY DISTRIBUTED $230 MILLION TO VICTIMS OF HULK RAMPAGES...
...BUT A PERCENTAGE OF THE PROFITS IS RESERVED FOR THE SHAREHOLDERS-- AND YOUR FIRST CHECKS ARE WORTH $234,484 EACH.
IS THAT... GOOD?
YES. YES, IT IS.
ENOUGH TO GET YOU INTO TROUBLE, RICK.
BUT NOT ENOUGH TO GET YOU INTO REAL TROUBLE, I HOPE.
YEAH, YEAH.

AND JUST A FEW MORE THINGS.
SKAAR, KORG, ELLOE, NO-NAME...
...YOU'RE ONLY ON THIS PLANET BECAUSE OF ME.
SO IN CASE YOU EVER WANT TO FIND ANOTHER HOME...
...I'VE REVERSE ENGINEERED THE PLANS FOR YOUR SAKAARIAN STONE STARSHIP.
THE BENEFIT CORPORATION CAN BEGIN CONSTRUCTION ON YOUR COMMAND.
AND BETTY... I GUESS THIS IS KIND OF SIMILAR...
...I'VE PULLED YOU INTO SO MUCH INSANITY...
...IN THIS BOX ARE ALL THE DOCUMENTS YOU NEED FOR A COMPLETELY UNTRACEABLE NEW IDENTITY.
ALL ENTIRELY LEGAL.
A FRESH START. JUST IN CASE.
AND RICK. I BEQUEATH TO YOU JIMI HENDRIX'S GUITAR.
YEP.
WHAT?
WHAT?
JIMI HENDRIX'S GUITAR.
AND FINALLY...
...FOR EVERYONE IN MY FAMILY...

...AN EVERYDAY, OLD-FASHIONED, FIVE-DOLLAR KITCHEN TIMER.
YOU'VE ALL BEEN HULKS, IN ONE WAY OR ANOTHER.
SO YOU KNOW ABOUT ANGER.
AND DEPENDING ON HOW I DIED, YOU MAY BE FEELING THAT ANGER NOW.
AND MAYBE THAT ANGER IS TELLING YOU SOMETHING NEEDS TO BE DONE.
I TRIED A LOT OF THINGS TO CONTROL THE HULK.
NO, TO CONTROL MYSELF.
(I'VE REALLY GOT TO STOP THAT THIRD-PERSON THING.)
AND MOST OF THEM DIDN'T WORK THAT WELL. BUT HERE'S ONE THAT HELPED.
IF I FELT LIKE I ABSOLUTELY HAD TO DO SOMETHING, I WAITED.
FIRST, I TRIED TO WAIT TWENTY-FOUR HOURS.
BUT THAT'S A REALLY LONG TIME. AND I'D GIVE UP AFTER A FEW SECONDS. SO I WORKED ON THE TIMING A BIT. AND EVENTUALLY, I CAME UP WITH A NUMBER.
THREE MINUTES.
BEFORE DOING ANYTHING HUGE, I WAITED THREE MINUTES.

BUT THAT COULDN'T BE THREE MINUTES DOING SOMETHING ELSE.
THAT HAD TO BE THREE MINUTES OF DOING...
...NOTHING AT ALL.
JUST SITTING THERE, THINKING.
SO THIS IS WHAT I WANT YOU TO DO.
MY ONE BIG REQUEST.
BEFORE YOU DO ANYTHING...
...RASH...
...TAKE THAT TIMER. TURN THE DIAL. AND WAIT THREE MINUTES.
THAT'S IT.
I LOVE YOU ALL.

TWELVE HOURS LATER.
BANNER HIDEOUT B-733.
DAMMIT.
60
55
5
50
45
40
CRRAAAANK
TRISKELION MEDICAL BAY.
STASIS ROOM OF JENNIFER WALTERS.
DAMN.
CRRAANK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GOODBYE, BRUCE.
TIK
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SIGH

SOUTHERN FRANCE.
TIK TIK TIK TIK
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CRRAKKKK
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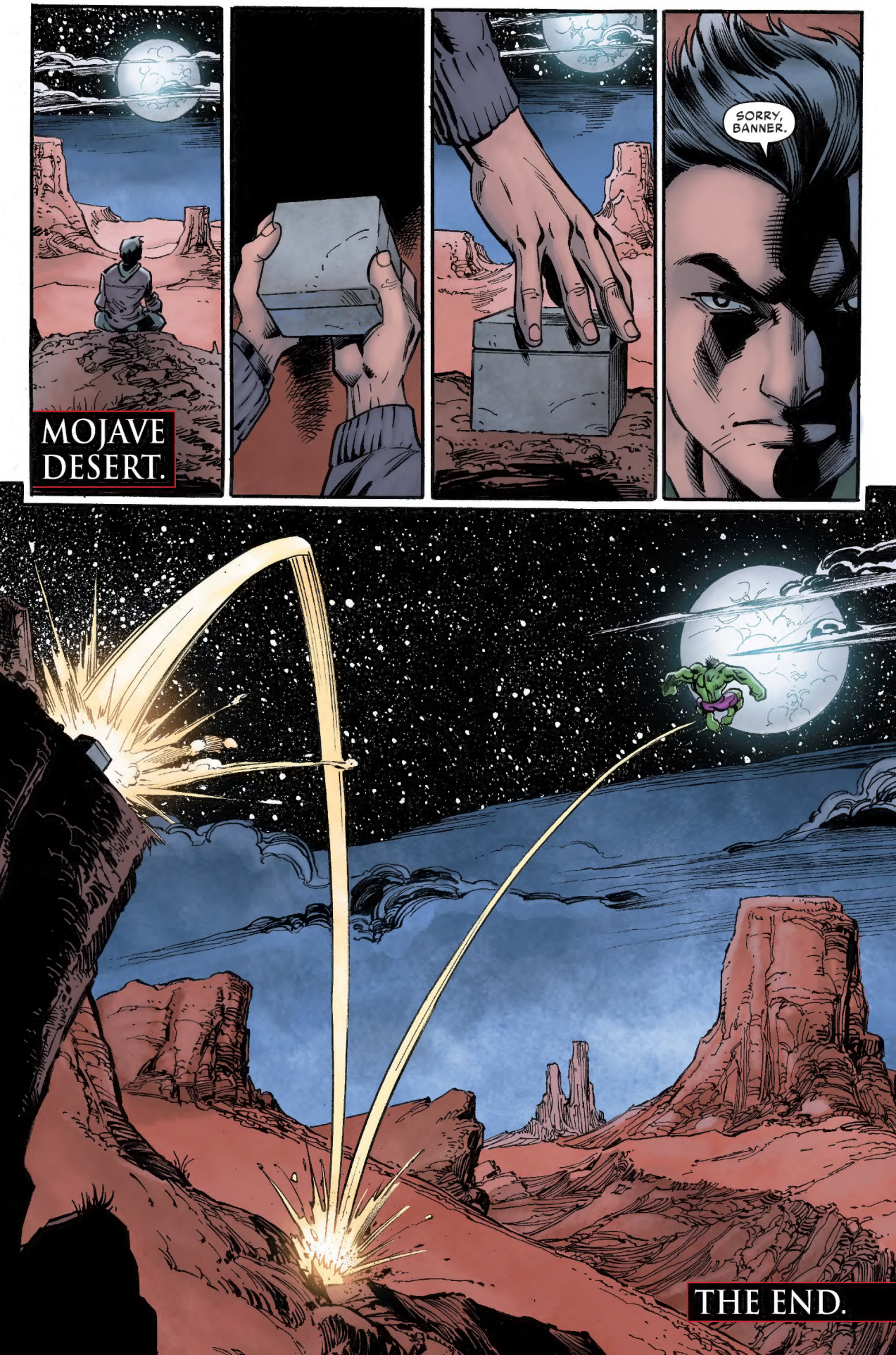
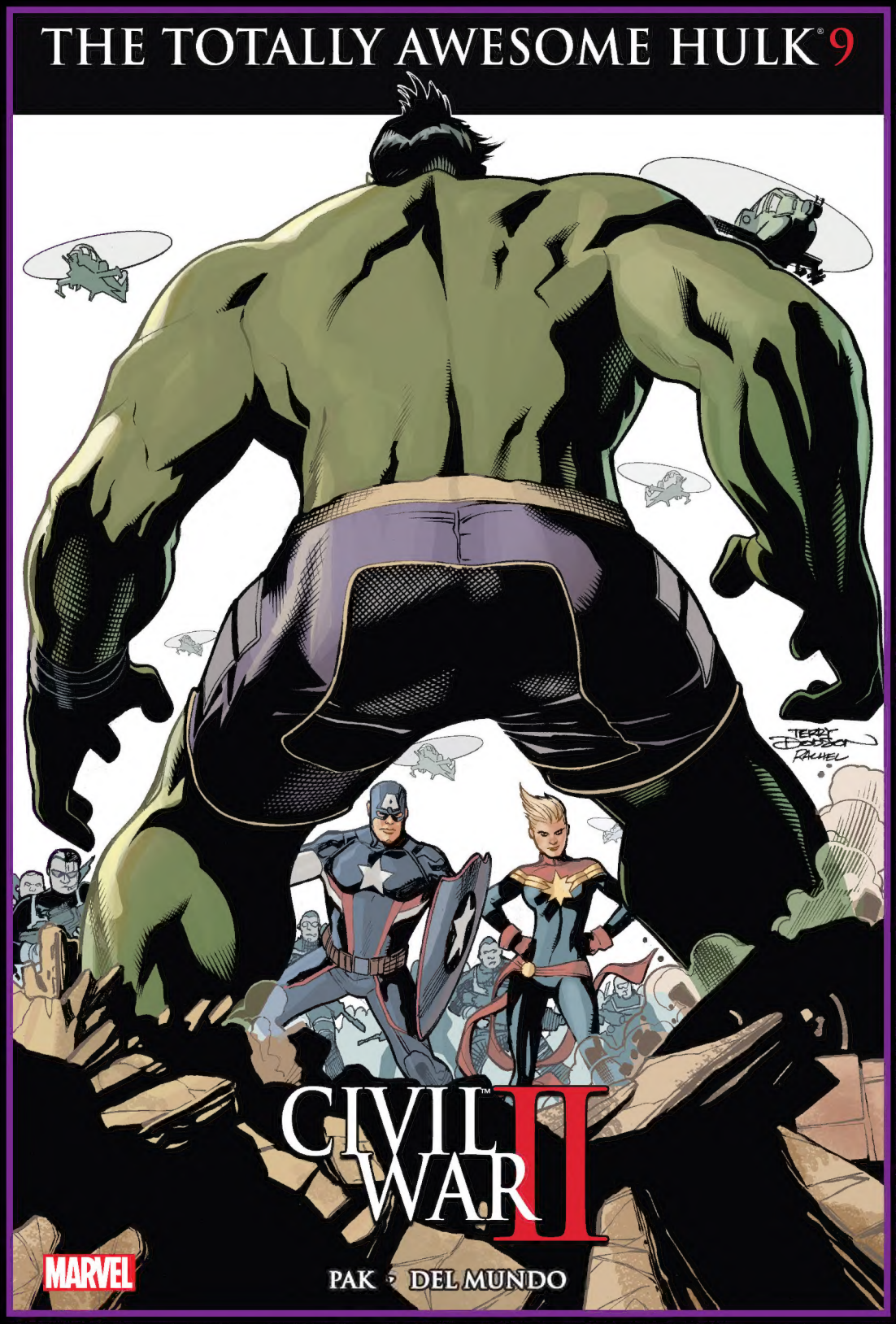

MOJAVE DESERT.
SORRY, BANNER.
THE END.

SEE HOW AMADEUS REACTS IN:



ON SALE NOW!